

The Goodwill Messenger

Published by the Village Church of Cummington

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Organist: Heather Williams

Church Office: 634-5508
Service 10:00 AM, 1st & 3rd Sundays

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cummingtonvillagechurch.org

Village Church—Open and Affirming—You are welcome here

Minister's Message

Dear Friends,

Thanksgiving morning, I went out very early. The storm was passing. There was no electricity in our area. We still don't have phone. It was apparent I had grown accustomed to my neighbor's barn equipment and the busy buzz of nearby roads in the morning: I was struck by how quiet it was. A holiday morning. A foot of snow with road traffic extremely minimal. No power. The winds gone. The birds still under cover. I had risen to Nature's holy day rejoicing in true, extended silence.

"Silent Night" has such a cultural hold because we have known that holy quiet, even with a baby crying in the background, even with angelic choruses singing far-off. This season, the Village Church offers an assortment of programs to mix the merry with the quiet, the song with the silence. See the holiday schedule below and come on by this season of lights and shadows, the bright with the dark. I look forward to seeing you mixing it up in a way just right for you.

I wish everyone a wonderful season of holy days and nights. While I don't wish on us too many bad storms, I hope we can all know that deep holy quiet aplenty.

—Rev. Jon

Rev. Jon's Schedule in December-January

I will be away from the area beginning December 25 and returning Jan. 7. During this period, Stephen Philbrick of the West Cummington Church will be available for emergencies. If an emergency arises, please also contact one of the deacons whose information is listed in the Good Will Messenger. Steve can be reached by phone (413-684-3852) or email (stephenphilbrick@verizon.net) during that time. I otherwise welcome your calls or messages between now and Christmas (413-624-3025; jon-rehms@gmail.com), and my usual day in Cummington will be Thursdays. Come by for a chat or feel free to make an appointment: I'd be pleased to share a cup of tea, a walk, or just sit and talk.

Joint Blue Christmas Service

Join us for Blue Christmas, this year at the Village Church in Cummington on Dec. 18 at 7 PM. Led by the ministries of the Village, West Cummington, and Plainfield Congregational Churches, the 3 congregations and all interested are invited to embrace the quiet dark and share in music, poetry, story, and reflection. This service welcomes those for whom the season is difficult because of loss, painful memory, or difficult times. It also welcomes those who wish to unplug from the usual Christmas energies and to reflect on where they are in the season. All ages are welcome, and the sanctuary is fully accessible.



50th Annual Messiah Sing!

This year it is a special occasion as the fiftieth performance of the Messiah Sing happens at the Village Church on Sunday December 28, 2014. Come and sing, or just to listen and enjoy.

December At the Village Church

December 4, 11, 18—Minister in Office, 5–5:45 PM

Meditation, 5:45–6:15 PM

*December 7—1st Sunday—Service at 10 AM, Special Eucharist Service—come and share a meal with us
Brunch provided, all welcome*

December 12—Friday Night Café—Old Country road

December 14—Better Breathing Workshop, 3:00–5:30 PM

December 18—Blue Christmas Service, 7:00 PM

December 19—Christmas Caroling!! 6:00–7:30 PM

December 19—3rd Friday music jam 7:00–10:00 PM

December 21—3rd Sunday—Service, 10:00 AM

December 24—Christmas Eve Service, 6:30 PM

December 25—Merry Christmas!

December 28—50th Annual Messiah Sing!

No service January 4th.

Christmas Caroling in the Village

Meet at Village Church on Friday, December 19. Caroling from 6:00–7:30 PM, warm-up refreshments afterward. All ages welcome.

*In the darkest of days,
we declare a season of light...*

Merry Christmas to all our Christian friends!



And to our friends of other faiths and holidays, we wish happiness and love and peace now and in the coming year!

Celebrate!

And a Happy New Year to All!

From the Librarian's Desk

Book Signing & Computer Class

We've got a couple of upcoming events that we're excited about. On Saturday December 20th, from 10:30 until closing, local author Kathleen Duffy and our own Charlie Stickney will be here to sign copies of her children's book *It's All About Charlie*, based on her good friend of more than 27 years. It should be fun. We'll have a few refreshments too, so come on by.

Our resident computer genius Ken Graf has offered to teach a free computer class here at the Bryant Free Library this winter, and while final details are still being worked out, we can say at the moment that it will be geared for adults and high school students, with a class size not exceeding a dozen participants. Classes will most likely be held on Saturday afternoons and run for two hours; an hour and a half of instruction and a half hour of active review. Ken will be emphasizing Microsoft Windows (mostly 7 but also Classic View 8 and XP) and the Google Chrome browser, although he will also be introducing other browsers such as Firefox, Internet Explorer, and Tor. Separate offerings will include email, eBay, Picasa, Craigslist, Blogs, PowerPoint, and more. There won't be any textbooks but there'll be a small amount of homework, and while attendance is optional it's highly recommended, for there'll be few ways to catch up from a missed class. For those who can't bring their own laptop Ken will have a few extras which will be prioritized for those who sign-up first. Ken hopes to have some tutors on hand to help beginners, for the ability to use a mouse is essential. No one will be graded... it's all about learning! Anything you glean will be a big plus for you in this ever-increasing computer age! Those who are interested should email Ken at computer.class2@aol.com or call Mark at 634-5400. There will be an organizational meeting at the BFL prior to the start of classes and those who've left their contact info will be notified as to the date and time. I hope some of you will be able to join us for this outstanding opportunity.

See you at the library!
—Mark



On November 16, Bruce and Phoebe Harrison demonstrated how to make apple cider at the Old Creamery

Visit VC Church website at cummingtonvillagechurch.org

The Goodwill Messenger, deadline for the January 2015 issue is December 29, 2014. Any personal news, an event, a business to promote with a paid advertisement or anything else worth noting please send to John at mrbllooz@verizon.net or Pat at patakeith@gmail.com, mail to VCC, PO Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026 or leave it in the drop box, marked GWM located in the back entryway of the Village Church. Please be sure to include all the details, and a contact number in case we have questions.

Stone Walls II

The Editorial Board of STONE WALLS II, a new journal of the arts, history and culture of the Hilltowns of Western Massachusetts, announces the release of its first issue at a launch party on Sunday, December 7, from 2–4 PM. The event will take place at the Worthington Historical Society's center at 6 Williamsburg Road in Worthington.

Pat Kennedy, President of the Editorial Board, described the project in these words: "Stone Walls II is equal parts memory and adventure. We started with the original Stone Walls magazine, published continually from 1975 to 1993 by a local group of teachers, historians and artists, as our inspiration. Then we wondered what we could do to bring that same spirit of artistic outreach into the unique Hilltowns of the 21st century, not yet fully wired into the internet and still attracting young farmers. The result is Stone Walls II."

This first issue of Stone Walls II will feature an exclusive joint interview with Cummington's two national Poets Laureate, William Jay Smith and Richard Wilbur, as they describe their experiences in these small towns of Western Massachusetts. It will include selected fiction, poetry, nonfiction and graphic art. For more information, go to www.stonewallstwo.com.

The December 7 launch gathering will include a chance to meet some of the artists and Editorial Board members. Copies of the first issue of Stone Walls II will be available for purchase. Light fare & beverages will be offered. For more information or to order copies of the first issue, email us at pat.kennedy@the-spa.com or write to Stone Walls II, P.O. Box 285, Worthington, MA 01098.

Friday Night Café

On November 14 Laurie Israel and friends performed music from the World War I era, commemorating that war's beginning one hundred years ago. There were also folk songs and readings from writers of the time. Laurie, Bill Sheppard and David Perkins played and sang, and Alice Schertle and Susan Pearson did the reading.

On the 28th Dave Watson performed with some friends for a great evening of those old country blues.



Above: Laurie Israel Below: Dave Watson & friends



Central Berkshire School News

News from the Central Berkshire Regional School District School Committee, Cummington Representative

As the newly elected Cummington representative on the Central Berkshire Regional School District's School Committee, I want to raise awareness of the proposal to close Berkshire Trail Elementary School in Cummington and perhaps, in the near future, the Becket-Washington School. While I acknowledge the current budget concerns and certainly the work of the present board, I feel strongly that a more exhaustive study is needed prior to making decisions of this magnitude. I would like to see the School Committee and administration work together to create a Strategic Plan for the district schools that is amenable to all towns the district serves.

On the School Committee's agenda at the last meeting, held on November 13, listed under Article 1089-Communications was "other/District Consolidation (Possible Vote to Close a School)." Due to technicalities about how it was written and a potential Open Meeting Law violation the vote to close Berkshire Trail was postponed until the *December 11, 2014 meeting, to be held at Nessacus Middle School in Dalton at 7 PM.* The school it speaks of is Berkshire Trail Elementary School in Cummington. If you wish to stay informed about CBRSD School Committee actions, all meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. On each agenda is Article-Responses from the audience, this a time set aside at each full meeting to hear remarks from the audience. This is an important meeting for all residents of the district, especially Cummington. If you seek further information or discussion I invite you to call, 413-563-1981 or email patakeith@gmail.com. Also visit: www.CBRSD.org for agendas, minutes of meetings, budgets, etc.

—Pat Keith

Holiday Hob Nob

Come one, come all to the 8th Annual Holiday Hob Nob (formerly the potlatch) at Village Church. This fun event will take place on December 6th from 10:00 to 1:00. You may drop off donations of new or used gift quality items on Friday, December 5th. Call Kathy Harrison at 634-5631 to set up a time. Especially needed are toys, decorations, clothes, especially warm outerwear, sporting equipment and housewares. What is not needed are broken toys, clothes beyond their useful life and older electronics. This is a great opportunity to fill a wish list without spending any money. Donations to defray the cost of heating the church are greatly appreciated.

National Honor Society

There are two new inductees to the National Honor Society. Lily Howes, daughter of Jerry and Karen Howes, and Quincy Heon, son of Chris and Lori Heon, were inducted on October 30, 2014, at W.R.H.S. where they are both Juniors. Congratulations to both!

To rent the church space for classes, concerts, meetings, etc., please call Scott at 634-5084. The church charges a very nominal fee to cover upkeep & heat. We love having the building used!!

For personal, church needs or questions please contact one of the Deacons, John Maruskin at 634-5320, Kathy Harrison at 634-5631, Kathleen Knox at 634-8041 or Pat Keith 634-5084 or leave a message at the church 634-5508.

Hilltown Choral Society Celebrates its 58th Season!

The Holiday Concerts will be held this year on Saturday, December 6 at 11:00 AM at Storrowton Village in West Springfield and Sunday, December 7 at 4:00 PM at the Chesterfield Congregational Church.

We are excited this year to expand our horizons and be a part of the free Yuletide Festival at Storrowton Village.

Jeffrey Hunt, choral director, will lead both concerts accompanied by Amy Renak and the Hilltown Ensemble.

Suggested donation for the Chesterfield Concert is \$8.00 for adults, \$5.00 for seniors and students. Light refreshments will be served after the concert.

For more information call Elaine Holder at 634-5353.

Halloween on Main Street

It was a lovely Halloween evening this year, not too cold, and lots of fun with lots of kids. Rev. Jon Rehmus was on the church's vestry porch again, with cider and doughnut holes for the trick or treaters. The Cummington Fire Department brought out a big fire truck to lead the parade again and Selectperson Monica Vandoloski, in witch's costume, sat on the Community House steps handing out candy to the children.



Above: trick or treaters parade behind the fire truck

Below: Jon Rehmus and Kathy Harrison greet folks in front of the church



Shirley Todd



Integrative Acupressure
Cranio Sacral Therapy
Reiki

Offices in Cummington
and Northampton
413-634-2134

Cummington, MA 01026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Family Center Play Group 9:30–11:30 AM	Finance Office (Tax Collector, Treas., Acct.) open 6–7 PM	Admin. Assistant Hours 9–11 AM	Transfer Station open 7–11 AM
Veterans Agent 9–11 AM	Board of Health 1 st & 3 rd Tues. 7 PM (2nd floor)	Council on Aging Office Hours 9–noon (C.H. Annex)	Town Clerk 6–7:30 PM (2nd floor)	Family Center Play Group 9:30–11:30 AM	Bryant Library open 8:30 AM–12:30 PM
Assessor Office Hours 9:30–11:30 AM (upstairs in C.H.)		Bryant Library open 6–9 PM	Selectboard meets 7 PM		
Bryant Library open 6–9 PM		Transfer Station open 5:30–7:30 PM	Building Inspector 7–9 PM (upstairs in C. H.)		
		Planning Board 2nd, 4th weeks 7 PM	Board of Assessors meets 2 nd , 4 th Thursdays 6–8 PM		

<http://kensstuff.blogspot.com>

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